INTRODUCTION

There is a growing perception and concern among the general population that violence by children, particularly violence at schools, is on the increase. Statistics, on the other hand, reveal that incidents of violence in schools are infrequent. However, we are made more acutely aware of school violence because the media has put us "on the scene, live" of fast-breaking news events focusing on violence such as the media coverage of the shootings in the spring of 1999 at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado.

The Office of Public Instruction on its web site has responded to the public's concern about school violence by developing an icon (a revolver with a slash mark through it) under the heading of "Safe Schools." It includes the following topic areas: **Resource Materials, Web Links, Model Crisis Plan, Workshop Meetings, Products,** and **Crisis Hot-Line Phone Numbers**.

This **Violence Prevention Resource Guide** includes the **Crisis Hot-Line Phone Numbers** and a sampling of the **Web Links** section. The **Guide** has also included some comments from Secretary Richard W. Riley on school violence, as well as a description of some of the other activities the Office of Public Instruction has pursued in countering school violence.

Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley's comments made on September 14, 1999, were addressed to the Senate Subcommittee on **Labor, HHS (Health and Human Services), Education and Related Agencies**:

> …Tragic events in place such as Littleton, Colorado; Springfield, Oregon; and … Jonesboro, Arkansas, have driven home the fact that horrible acts of violence can strike anywhere, even in communities and school districts that are generally safe.

These initial comments of the Secretary were brought home to us in Montana with bomb threats that were made in the Roundup schools. Roundup schools' reactions were vividly described in an e-mail to Safe and Drug-Free Schools project directors by Joni Bullock, who until this year was the project director for the Musselshell Valley's Safe and Drug-Free Schools "greatest need" project:

> It gives me sorrow that local events necessitate this request (for metal detectors); however, we are living in a sorrowful time of anger, hurt, and frustration.

> Roundup schools have been responding to a recent Columbine-like threat of violence toward students. All involved have responded reasonably and responsibly, with schools, community agencies, and families working together to keep students safe. Both buildings had lockdowns…with students' belongings checked and metal detectors borrowed from the FBI. We must return the metal detectors to the FBI…and our superintendent is seeking info on costs and vendors for purchasing metal detectors.

Of course, we will continue diligent prevention efforts to reduce the circumstances that cause students to seek violent means of expressing their frustrations; however, we must also take immediate actions to protect the safety of our kids from current threats.

Secretary Riley in his testimony to the Senate Subcommittee highlighted what seems to be working to counter school violence:

Despite recent, high-profile cases such as those in Jefferson County, Colorado and Springfield, Oregon, schools remain safe places. Less than 1 percent of homicides among youth aged 12-19 occur in schools and 90 percent of schools haven't reported any serious violent crime.

- There are many examples of schools that are doing a great job of ensuring that all students and faculty work and learn in an atmosphere that is safe, disciplined, and drug-free. We also know that there are numerous programs that, if implemented appropriately, can be very effective in reducing and preventing school crime and violence.
- There is a direct link between school reform issues and safe schools. Safe schools are schools where teachers are adequately trained; where the ratio between teachers and students is sufficient to ensure that no children "fall between the cracks"; where the instructional program is strong; where teachers and students treat each other with respect and civility; and where buildings are not overcrowded or decaying.
- The most effective way to address school crime and violence is through a community-wide approach. While sound discipline policies and effective violence prevention programming are important elements in any effort to create safe, disciplined, and drug-free learning environments, we must also work to create access to adequate mental health resources; after-school programming; quality child care; early childhood services; and family strengthening programs. These services…do not necessarily need to be provided for by schools; however, linkages with medical and public health professionals, community groups and others that have responsibility for providing these services are necessary.
- Almost every school in the country is doing something to help create environments that are conducive to teaching and learning. For example, every school district in the country has policies prohibiting the possession of firearms, and almost every school has policies regarding the use and possession of illicit drugs. Further, almost every school district in the country has some sort of programming related to the prevention of drug use or violent behavior. Unfortunately, not all the programs being implemented are based upon sound research and many may have only limited effectiveness.
- Schools have not always been prepared to deal with issues related to crime, especially serious violent crime. While a growing number of schools have "crisis plans" or "school safety plans," many still do not.
- Schools are not always prepared to deal with the aftereffects of a serious crime or crisis. Experience with recent shootings in Springfield, Oregon, and Jefferson County, Colorado, has taught us that there are significant psychological and

emotional consequences of serious and violent crime and that these issues have to be dealt with if teaching and learning are to resume.

- There are ways to identify students who are experiencing trouble and the earlier we can provide these students with help the more likely it is that we will be able to help them resolve their problems. Unfortunately, in many school systems and communities resources are simply inadequate to support students identified with mental health problems.

The Office of Public Instruction and Montana schools have already addressed some of Secretary Riley's concerns by providing training for school personnel and resource materials to prepare schools for countering violence. The Office of Public Instruction initiated the **Montana Behavioral Initiative (MBI)** in 1995 to implement "a comprehensive staff development venture…to improve the capacities of schools and communities to meet the diverse and increasingly complex social, emotional and behavioral needs of students." In June of 1999, approximately 900 school teams from around the state received training on how to protect their districts from acts of violence and how to implement the MBI process at the school level.

Two new manuals on crisis management from the Office of Public Instruction have been placed on OPI's web site and have been distributed to Montana's schools: **Safe Schools and Crisis Management Guidelines, Strategies & Tools** and **Crisis Management Resource Guide**.

Secretary Riley's comment that there "are ways to identify students who are experiencing trouble" is addressed by the American Psychological Association in their free pamphlet "Warning Signs" which deals with such topics as reasons for violence and recognizing violence warning signs. Contact the American Psychological Association at 1-800-268-0078 or go to: helping.apa.org.

Through the **Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Program** school districts have instituted peer mediation programs, conflict resolution curricula, social skills training, parent education programs and activities focusing on character education.

We, at the Office of Public Instruction, hope that our web site and **Violence Prevention Resource Guide** are useful tools in helping schools prevent or intervene in incidents of school violence.

Mental Health Crisis/Emergency Phone Numbers

Mental Health Crisis/Emergency Phone Numbers:

County	Countywide number – anytime	Local community/area number
Beaverhead	800-221-0106	Dillon area Weekdays…………………..…683-2200
Big Horn	800-266-7198	Hardin area Weekdays…………………..665-1049
Blaine	888-718-2100	Chinook area Weekdays.………………..…357-3364
Broadwater	888-442-5353	Townsend area Weekdays…………………..443-7151
Carbon	800-266-7198	Red Lodge area Weekdays…………………..446-2500
Carter	800-597-6606	
Cascade	888-718-2100	Great Falls area Anytime…………………….....761-2100
Chouteau	888-718-2100	
Custer	800-597-6606	Miles City area Anytime…………………..…232-1688
Daniels	800-597-6608	
Dawson	877-392-9767	Glendive area Anytime…………………....365-6074
Deer Lodge	800-221-0106	Anaconda area Weekdays………………..…563-3413
Fallon	800-597-6606	
Fergus	800-266-7198	Lewistown area Weekdays………………..…538-7483
Flathead	800-221-0106	Kalispell area Anytime…………………..…752-6262
Gallatin	800-266-7198	Bozeman area Weekdays………………..…522-7357 Nights, weekends, holidays.……..586-3333
Garfield	800-597-6606	
Glacier	888-718-2100	Cut Bank area Weekdays………………..…873-5538
Golden Valley	800-266-7198	
Granite	800-221-0106	
Hill	888-718-2100	Havre area Weekdays………………..…265-9639
Jefferson	888-442-5353	
Judith Basin	800-266-7198	
Lake	800-221-0106	Polson area Weekdays………………..…676-8500 Nights, weekends, holidays.….…676-4441
Lewis & Clark	888-442-5353	Helena area Anytime………………….....443-5353 Lincoln area Weekdays………………..…362-4603
Liberty	888-718-2100	
Lincoln	800-221-0106	Libby area Weekdays………………..…293-8746 Nights, weekends, holidays……...293-4112
McCone	877-392-9767	

Mental Health Crisis/Emergency Phone Numbers

County	Countywide number – anytime	Local community/area number
Madison	800-221-0106	
Meagher	800-266-7198	
Mineral	800-221-0106	Superior area Weekdays…………………………822-4093
Missoula	800-221-0106	Missoula area Anytime…………………….....728-6817
Musselshell	800-266-7198	Roundup area Weekdays……………………..323-1142
Park	800-266-7198	Livingston area Weekdays………………………222-3332 Nights, weekends, holidays……..586-3333
Petroleum	800-266-7198	
Phillips	800-597-6608	
Pondera	888-718-2100	Conrad area Weekdays………………………278-3205
Powder River	800-597-6606	
Powell	800-221-0106	Deer Lodge area Weekdays………………………563-3413
Prairie	800-597-6606	
Ravalli	800-221-0106	Hamilton area Weekdays……………………..363-1051 Nights, weekends, holidays...…………911
Richland	877-392-9768	Sidney area Weekdays 8–noon & 1–5…….....482-6930
Roosevelt	800-597-6608	Wolf Point area Weekdays 8–noon & 1–5……....653-1872
Rosebud	877-392-9771	Forsyth area Weekdays 8–noon & 1–5……....356-7654
Sanders	800-221-0106	Thompson Falls area Weekdays………………………827-4377
Sheridan	800-597-6608	Plentywood area Weekdays 8–noon & 1–5……....765-2550
Silver Bow	800-221-0106	Butte area Anytime………………….…..723-7995
Stillwater	800-266-7198	Columbus area Weekdays……………………..322-4514
Sweet Grass	800-266-7198	Big Timber area Weekdays……………………..932-5924
Teton	888-718-2100	Choteau area Weekdays………………………466-5681
Toole	888-718-2100	Shelby area Weekdays………………………434-5285
Treasure	877-392-9771	
Valley	800-597-6608	Glasgow area Anytime…………………….....228-9349
Wheatland	800-266-7198	Harlowton area Weekdays………………………632-4778
Wibaux	877-392-9767	
Yellowstone	800-266-7198	Billings area Weekdays………………………252-5658

http://helping.apa.org/warningsigns/index.html
The **American Psychological Association** and **MTV** have produced a guide that helps young people recognize when classmates or friends might be dangers to themselves or others.

http://www.cde.ca.gov/spbranch/safety/crisis.html
California Department of Education: Crisis Management and Response

http://www.ncsu.edu/cpsv/
Established in 1993, the **Center for the Prevention of School Violence** serves as a point of contact for dealing with the problem of school violence. The Center focuses on providing resources to ensure safe and secure schools. The Center is a nationally recognized resource for School Resource Officer Programs.

http://www.talkingwithkids.org/
Talking With Kids About Tough Issues is a national initiative by **Children Now** and the **Kaiser Family Foundation** to encourage parents to talk with their children earlier and more often about tough issues like sex, HIV/AIDS, violence, alcohol and drug abuse. There are many free resources including the booklet "Talk With Your Kids About Violence" and "Talk With Your Kids About Tough Issues"

http://nettleton.crsc.k12.ar.us/crisis.htm
Crisis Management Plan developed by the Jonesboro, Arkansas School District

www.ed.gov.offices/OESE/ESEA
"Educational Excellence for All Children Act of 1999" President Clinton and Secretary Riley. Provisions include a School Emergency Response to Violence Program aimed at providing rapid response to districts that experience traumas. Website contains more information on the Act.

http://www.keepschoolssafe.org/cris.htm
Keep Schools Safe: Crisis Management
The National Association of Attorneys General and the National School Boards Association have joined together to address the escalating problem of youth violence occurring across our country. Their Youth Violence and School Safety Initiative is dedicated to promoting a mutual response to violent instances occurring in our communities and schools.

http://www.preventviolence.org
This web site has materials and information regarding the prevention of violence, including a community action guide called *"Keeping Youth Safe: The Critical After School Hours, A Guidebook for Local Action."*

http://www.weprevent.org/
National Crime Prevention Council
Things teens can do to get involved in the community. Links to other sites for teens. Mostly involving volunteer activities in the community. Tips on managing conflict for adults and kids.

http://www.nea.org/issues/safescho
National Education Association conducts courses on classroom management and information on safe schools on its web site.

http://www.nssc1.org/
National School Safety Center
NSSC's mandate is to focus national attention on cooperative solutions to problems that disrupt the educational process. Special emphasis is placed on efforts to rid schools of crime, violence and drugs, and on programs to improve student discipline, attendance, achievement and school climate. NSSC provides technical assistance, legal and legislative aid, and publications and films. Many other sites referenced this site and/or organization.

http://www.osba.org/hotopics/crismgmt/index.htm
Oregon School Boards Association: Crisis Management
What to do when crisis hits in our schools.

http://eric-web.tc.columbia.edu/digests/dig115.html
"An Overview of Strategies to Reduce School Violence" is a digest on school violence available through the ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education.

http://www.pta.org/programs/crisis/
Parent Teacher Association created a new web site in response to school violence. Community Violence Prevention Kit is available.

http://www.PreventingCrime.org
"Preventing Crime: What Works, What Doesn't, What's Promising" The **University of Maryland**'s study. This study, available in full or through a **National Institute of Justice** *Research in Brief* summary, details community crime prevention programs that don't work (such as boot camps and "Scared Straight" programs) and those that show promise, such as community-based mentoring and community-based after school programs.

http://www.tyc.state.tx.us/prevention/40010ref.html
Texas Youth Commission Office of Prevention 4900 North Lamar Boulevard Austin, Texas 78765 Gives special recognition to prevention programs that: begin early in the life of the child; address multiple risk factors; have been proven effective by research; target the entire community; and increase the nurturing capacity of future parents.

www.usmayors.org/uscm/best_practices
The U.S. Conference of Mayors has a database of best practices, *Preventing School Violence: Best Practices of Mayors in Collaboration with Police, Schools and the Community*.